

Washington, DC – This afternoon, Congressman Charles Gonzalez (TX-20) applauded the passage of the Department of Defense Appropriation Bill. This bill appropriates \$636.3 billion for the Department of Defense for FY 2010 -- \$508 billion for the base defense budget, \$128.3 billion for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and includes over \$5 million in San Antonio area defense projects requested by Congressman Gonzalez.

“By investing in key military resources at all levels this bill enables our nation to meet immediate military needs and provide crucial funding to support our troops in the field,” said Congressman Gonzalez. “I am proud to have included critical funding for San Antonio area defense projects in this bill. The funding will help prevent injury, enhance technology, and develop the next generation of defense equipment, which in turn saves lives in the battlefield.”

The bill included Gonzalez’s request of \$2.5 million to further develop the techniques used to manage noncompressible hemorrhage following combat injury project. Traumatic injury is a nationwide problem with severe and far-ranging consequences for US citizens, whether military or civilian. More specific studies show that noncompressible hemorrhage from injuries to the torso is the leading cause of potentially survivable deaths of American troops. Additionally, the bill included \$1 million for the Buster/Blacklight Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Development and \$2 million for the Expert Knowledge Transformation project in San Antonio.

The Defense Appropriations Act makes critical investments in the health, well-being and readiness of our armed forces. To protect our troops on the battlefield and make sure that our soldiers are well-prepared for any challenge that comes their way, this legislation provides our military with first class equipment. It gives them the weapons they need to fight the wars of today and prepare for the battles of tomorrow.

“We are keeping our promises to our troops and their families by protecting them as they go into battle. We are making key investments in troop readiness by funding the development of more advanced defense technology and better equipping our soldiers,” added Congressman Gonzalez.

This is the first time since the beginning of the war in Afghanistan in 2001 that funding for war operations has been included in the regular appropriations bill – rather than a supplemental.

Defense Appropriation Highlights:

Supporting Our Troops and Their Families

Military Pay Raise: Provides a 3.4 percent military pay raise.

End Strength: Provides \$122.4 billion to strength levels for active duty and Selected Reserve personnel.

Compensation for Stop-Loss: Recognizing the hardship placed on troops and their families by being forced to remain on active duty longer than planned, the measure continues efforts to end the practice of “stop-loss” and includes \$8.3 million, not requested, to pay troops \$500 for every month their term of service will be involuntarily and arbitrarily extended in 2010.

Readiness Training: Provides \$11 billion for critical readiness training so that our troops are prepared to successfully perform their missions.

First-Class Medical Care: Provides \$29.9 billion to provide our troops top-of-the-line medical care. This includes \$500 million for traumatic brain injury and psychological health. It also includes \$2.2 billion for the wounded, ill and injured (WII) programs.

Supporting Military Families: Provides \$472 million for Family Advocacy programs and fully funds Family Support and Yellow Ribbon programs. In addition, the bill includes \$20 million for Army National Guard Family Assistance Centers and reintegration.

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